

# Find your Perfect Cabin



## Search Like a Pro with These Tips



If you find a cabin on a vacation rental listing site, **do a Google search to see if the owner has a personal web site.** That way you can email or speak directly with the owner--and avoid service fees. Scan the listing for the property name, location and any unique or identifying features. Enter those terms as a Google search. Scroll through the results and look for images that match what you're looking for. You may find other properties with the same name, especially if the property has a more generic title.



Longevity on a listing site isn't a guarantee of a good rental or management. **Read reviews by past guests and look for emerging themes:** complaints or compliments on cleanliness, service, location or condition of cabin or amenities. Notice how the owner or manager responds to negative feedback. Is the reply defensive? Or do they acknowledge downfalls and offer solutions to resolve them? If the listing site shows the owner/manager answers 100% of inquiries and responds within a few hours, that's another good sign. Has the calendar been updated within the last 2-3 days?



Are photographs of the property inviting and well done? **Professional photographs indicate the owner or manager cares enough to show the rental to its best potential.** Are the photographs mostly of the interior or do they show more of the exterior or local attractions? If the owner doesn't have enough photos, they will often fill in with these types of images. Ask the owner if they have any more photos available so you can get a better feel for the rental. If you're looking specifically for a mountain view and the photographs show only winter views, ask the owner for summer time images when the trees and plants are green.



Some cabins have steep, winding roads leading to them and if you or your vehicle isn't up for the challenge, **investigate road access before booking.** If you have a trailer or are riding motorcycles, you'll need to know if the roads or parking at the property will be suitable. Or if you'll be staying at a cabin anytime from December to February, ask the owner what to expect when there's snow. Some property developments and associations have road maintenance in the winter but many rental cabins do not. **Trip cancellation insurance is a wise investment--especially during the winter** when bad weather or colds and flu can impact your plans.



Want some privacy? A secluded location can be a tall order in Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge. **Cabins in resorts are usually closer together. For more privacy, cabins outside of developments are a better bet.** Ask the owner for photos that show what's to the left and right of the cabin or wider view from the street. For security reasons, owners may not provide the address. If you do have the address, try Google Street View.

## My Search Notes

